



**GAMING**  
**MARKETING INSTITUTE**  
GAMING MARKETING MADE SIMPLE



# GAMING MARKETING FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)





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# Preface

The Gaming Marketing Institute (**GMI**) is an innovative initiative with a mission to clarify and simplify the practice of gaming marketing. GMI is owned and operated by the Esports Group, an agency with roots in esports and gaming since 2015. Which means this learning material is designed for, and by, practitioners.

Along those lines, this workbook provides answers to frequently asked questions (**FAQs**) related to gaming marketing practice, as well as creative exercises designed to shape how you think instead of encouraging memorization.

In other words, both the FAQs and exercises are a blueprint for constructing a knowledge foundation all marketers need to develop strategies and tactics core to effective gaming campaigns.

Where the objective is to encourage you, the reader, to recognize the immense business and career opportunities gaming marketing has to offer.



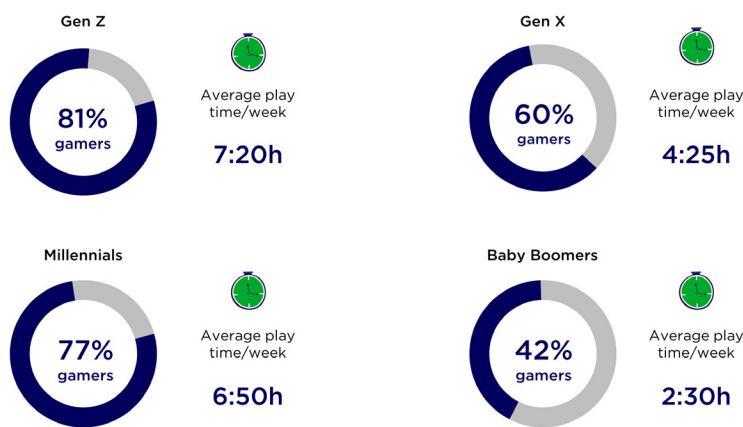
# How will I benefit?

Data from research firm Newzoo shows<sup>1</sup> that 81% of Generation Z play video games an average of **7 hours and 20 minutes a week**, and 77% of Millennials play video games an average of **6 hours and 50 minutes a week**. Those numbers speak to the reality that gaming is already a big part of younger generations' media and entertainment diet.

## 8/10 Gen Z and Millennial Consumers Are Playing Video Games

Consumers under 40 average around 7 hours of playtime a week, significantly more than older gamers

Share of Each Group that Played Games in the Past 6 Months  
Base: Total sample



### Key Insights

A remarkable 81% of Gen Z reports playing games. While this share decreases with each older generation, an impressive 42% of Baby Boomers play games.

We see a similar trend for time spent playing: the older the generation, the less time they dedicate to playing games every week. On average, Gen Z spends 7 hours and 20 minutes playing games—half an hour more than the Millennial average. This makes sense as Millennials—while still digital-native—typically have less leisure time due to full-time work and other life commitments. Meanwhile, Baby Boomers play for just 2-and-a-half hours per week; they tend to dedicate more leisure time to more traditional forms of entertainment.

newzoo © Newzoo 2021

Source: Newzoo CI Games & Esports (\*Global=weighted average across 33 markets).  
Total sample: Representative sample of online population aged 10-65/10-50 (coverage in regional and age scope differs by market)  
Base: Total sample (n=72,068), Gen Z (n=22,652), Millennials (n=26,123), Gen X (n=16,854), Baby Boomers (n=6,439)

*Baby Boomer, Gen Z, Millennial and Gen X Player Data*

In tandem, more brands and agencies are embracing gaming as a legitimate marketing and advertising destination. In many ways, gaming is a lot like social networking in the early 2000's. That means now is the time to level up your knowledge and skills to gain a competitive edge.

And just like social media, **gaming is poised to change the way businesses find and keep customers.** That means even if you are outside the gaming industry, you will still benefit from shaping an understanding of this exciting medium.

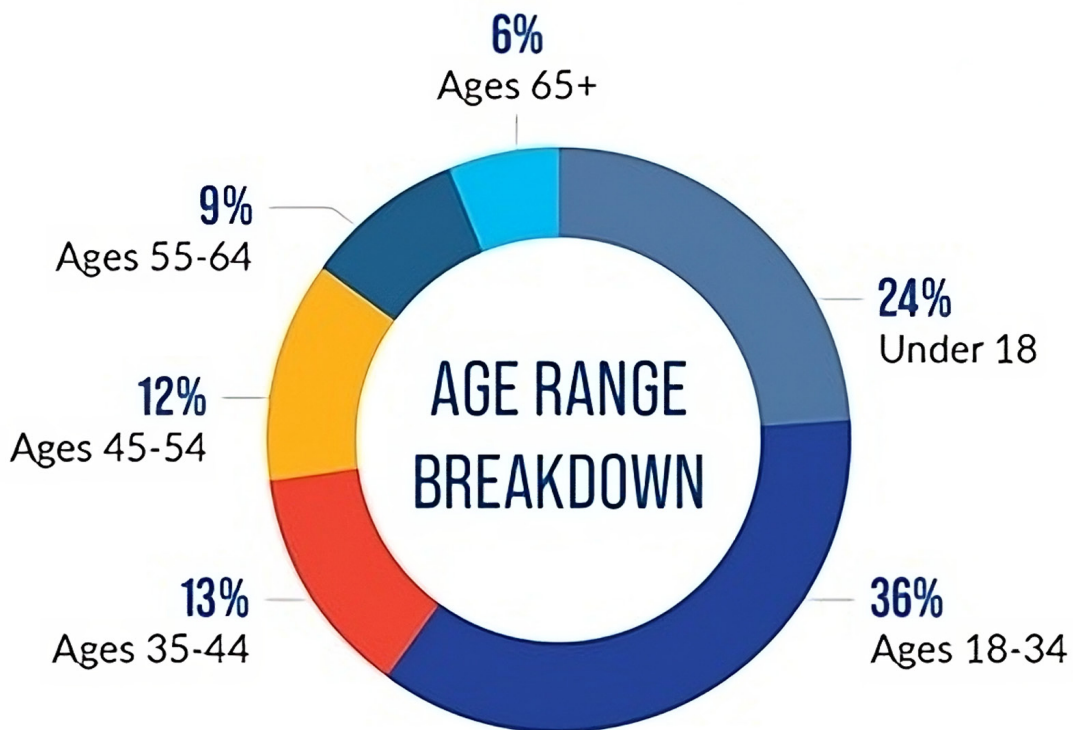
Where these frequently asked questions will prepare you to continue a learning journey with the Gaming Marketing Institute. One which we are confident will help you stay ahead of the competition and make a lasting impact.

<sup>1</sup> Newzoo Generations Report, 2021 [<https://newzoo.com/insights/articles/consumer-data-gen-z-millennials-baby-boomer-gen-x-engagement-games-esports-metaverse/>]

# Who is a gamer?

Games have the power to touch people's lives and inspire imagination, wonder, and awe. So, it's no surprise today's world is full of games and gamers. Where gamers are anyone from coworkers who play games on their phones at lunch, to your children, nieces and nephews playing online games after school to the millions of adults who follow esports.

For instance, while gaming is incredibly popular among younger age groups, according to the Entertainment Software Association, **76% of players are over 18 years of age.** Plus, 77% of parents play games with their kids.



The average video game player is  
**33 years old**

Across all ages,  
**76%**  
of players are over 18

Essential facts about the video game industry – ESA

2022

ESSENTIAL  
FACTS  
ABOUT THE  
VIDEO GAME  
INDUSTRY

77%  
of parents  
play with  
their kids

esa entertainment  
software  
association

That means, regardless of who you might think is, or is not, a gamer, gaming is a mainstream activity enjoyed by just about every demographic category across the world.

It also means, even if you're the type of person who would never pick up a video game, or identify as a gamer, the gaming marketing opportunity is too massive to ignore.



# What are video games?

A video, computer, or digital game not only engages and entertains, but also shapes the minds and emotions of those who interact with it. This reality is supported by a growing body of research on the effects gaming has on cognitive and emotional development.

For example, according to a 2011 study by Michigan State scholars,<sup>2</sup> among 500 12-year-old students, digital gameplay is linked to creativity. While the use of other forms of technology like computers, Internet, and mobile phones did not relate to enhanced creativity.

Another study showed<sup>3</sup> that certain commercially available video games are comparable to high school and university-level courses when it comes to spatial skills improvement.

That means every digital game is a space in which audiences experience moments that can shape their lives and impact their understanding of the world around them. In short, **games are experiences which engage the senses.**

We will explain how to think about games as experiences, instead of simply media and entertainment products, in a future learning module. However, for now, it suffices to say that a gaming audience is a population of people who experience games in any of the following ways.

The first is experience through play, called in-game experiences. This is commonly associated with the estimated 3 billion people who play video games annually. Whenever someone, or some group of people, plays a digital game, they are part of an in-game experience.

## *In-game experience*

*Interacting with a digital game through play*

The second is the creation and consumption of gameplay-related media, called around-game experiences. These experiences include sharing gameplay, also known as video game streaming, and watching other's gameplay.

<sup>2</sup> 2011 study by Michigan State scholars [<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0747563211002147>]

<sup>3</sup> The Malleability of Spatial Skills [<https://groups.psych.northwestern.edu/uttal/vittae/documents/ContentServer.pdf>]

The tens of billions of hours spent engaging with video game livestreaming on platforms like Twitch annually, and the hundreds of millions of fans who follow competitive video games, otherwise known as esports, fall in this category.

### ***Around-game experience***

*Audience creation and consumption of gameplay-related media*

The third category encompasses gaming-themed behaviors, which may or may not be digital at all, called away-from-game experiences. This includes audiences of video game adaptations, such as Arcane, Cyberpunk, The Cup head Show, Sonic the Hedgehog, and Uncharted.

Away from game experiences also include the populations who engage in other behaviors like attending gaming-related in-person events or buying gaming-themed merchandise.

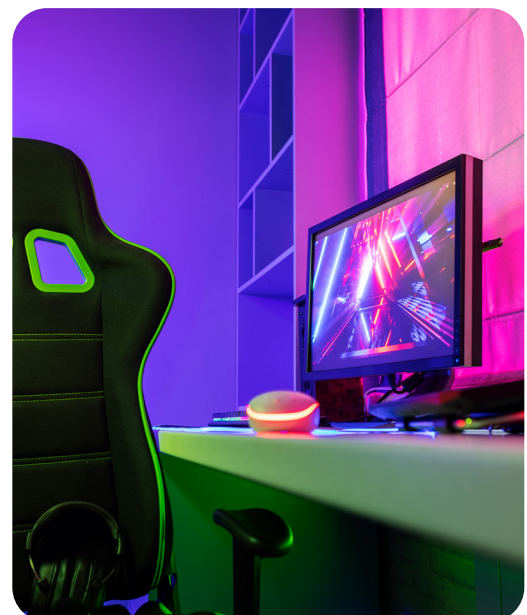
### ***Away-from-game experience***

*Gaming behaviors which may, or may not, be digital*

The reason we are grouping distinct behaviors, like esports and game streaming viewership, for example, into cohesive categories is to underscore similarities in how they are experienced. Since those similarities are critical to communicating with gaming audiences.

Plus, these three experience categories simplify your grasp of what would otherwise be a massively complex gaming ecosystem.

But that's exactly why the Gaming Marketing Institute is here – to simplify the concepts and models which unleash your creativity in gaming. Where our goal is to demystify and inspire effective gaming marketing!





# What is gaming?

Before we jump into how gaming can move the needle for target audiences. Let's establish a definition for the word gaming. So, you, as a marketer, are fully comfortable using the term in conversations with clients, stakeholders, and colleagues. And, since we will refer to it all throughout this and other learning materials.

When used as a verb, gaming defines *the act of engaging in a digital game experience*. This form is familiar enough that it is self-explanatory. An example of this usage is the sentence, I enjoy gaming with friends.

## **Gaming (verb)**

*The act of engaging in a digital game experience*

When used as a noun, we will clarify the definition of gaming as the following. *Something relevant to the moments, emotions, and systems associated with digital game experiences.*

## **Gaming (noun)**

*Something relevant to the moments, emotions, and systems associated with digital game experiences*



In this context, gaming is not a specific thing. Rather, digital games are the thing. While gaming is something relevant to, or associated with, how audiences experience them.

An example of this usage is the sentence, gaming creators are people who create content based on video games.

# What is gaming marketing?

Since we've already clarified what gaming means, let's define marketing. However, keep in mind that if you ask ten people to define marketing, you will hear ten different definitions.

Fortunately, we can agree that all forms of marketing exist to inspire people to act.

Whether the goal is gaining more social media followers, increasing customer loyalty, or promoting a positive brand perception. **Effective marketing spurs action.** Regardless of if that action is clicking the follow button, a repeat purchase, or passing a positive recommendation to friends and family.

That means when we combine the previously defined gaming, in noun form, with marketing, it creates the following definition of gaming marketing. **The activities associated with inspiring action through relevance to digital game experiences.**

## Gaming Marketing

*Inspiring action through relevance to digital game experiences*

Where, to be clear, relevance is an authentic connection to the emotions, moments, and or systems associated with a game experience.

So, while other forms of marketing focus on creating relevance to target audience needs, wants and lifestyles. Gaming marketing, instead, taps into the moments of engagement and interaction native to game experiences. Since those are already highly relevant to audience needs, wants, and lifestyles.

Such that, once your intended action is relevant to a game experience, audiences can perform it as an authentic part of how they experience the game.



# What is a gaming campaign?

As we previously established, gaming marketing is defined by *activities associated with inspiring action through relevance to digital game experiences.*

Likewise, effective gaming marketing campaigns include the following elements:

- An intended action or behavior (for a gaming audience)
- Clear and distinct relevance (to a game experience)
- Media and channels (used to communicate the above)

But what do gaming campaigns look like if audiences experience games in multiple ways?

Well, to answer that question, let's look at three executions which effectively inspire action by tapping into experiences in, around and away from video games.

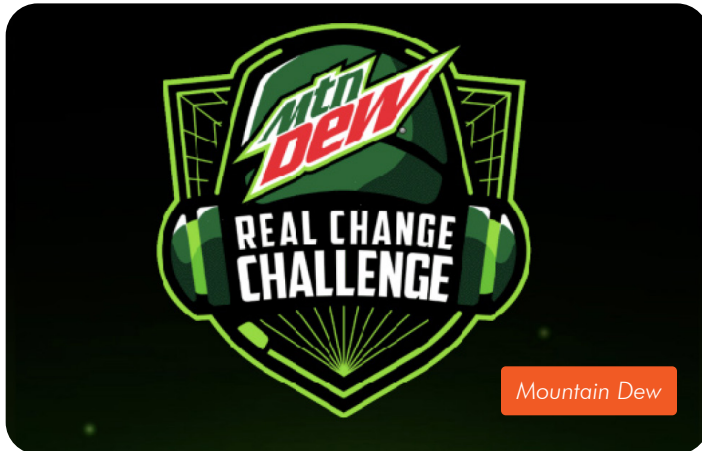
The first example is Nike's launch of a virtual experience on the Roblox gaming platform, called Nikeland. This in-game activation promotes brand engagement by integrating Nike into competition, exploration and virtual items within the Roblox platform.

Where, according to Nike, the virtual destination has been visited by well over 6 million people across the globe since its launch in November 2021.



The second is soft drink brand Mountain Dew's Real Change Challenge tournament. The around-game, experiential activation centered on a competitive tournament for historically black colleges and universities, broadcasted on Twitch, with a 500,000-dollar prize pool.

The intended behavior was brand association with Mountain Dew's parent company's mission to uplift Black communities and Black representation. One which Mountain Dew reaffirmed by providing coaching and a gaming contract for up to one year.



Last, but not least, iconic clothing brand Ralph Lauren partnered with the video game Fortnite to introduce a physical clothing collection. As part of the partnership, Ralph Lauren reimagined the iconic Polo Pony, to fit within the world of Fortnite. The result was an away from game product, in the form of physical clothes, designed to encourage purchase behavior on ecommerce channels.



# Which channels do I use?

As previously shown, gaming audiences experience games in, around and away from gameplay. In other words, gaming is not a unified audience nor is it a single media channel. So, while the buyable media inventory is growing, and, as the Nike Land activation demonstrated, there are more in-game brand integration opportunities available.

Gaming campaigns span the entire media and marketing mix. That means you should avoid channel vision, which is when you overemphasize any one channel in reaching and connecting with gaming audiences.

So, if you're comfortable on digital channels, use those. If you are focused on experiential activations, gaming fits there too. Whatever the case, relevance to game experiences, the distinguishing feature of a gaming marketing campaign, can be communicated over any channel.

And with an estimated 3 billion people across the globe playing games annually. Gaming is far from a niche audience!



# Are games and gaming marketing the same?

Even though games and gaming marketing sound the same, they are two different terms and activities.

Games marketing is about convincing audiences to play digital games. On the other hand, gaming marketing is about influencing behaviors other than digital gameplay – by way of relevance to digital game experiences.

To demonstrate, in March 2019, a source informed Reuters<sup>4</sup> that Tyler Blevins, also known as Ninja, a popular video game streamer, was paid \$1 million US dollars to play and promote Electronic Arts Incorporated's Apex Legends game title. While EA declined to comment on the actual dollar amount, the promotional deal was meant to influence people to play Apex Legends. In other words, it was a game marketing activity.

Later that same year, sports apparel brand Adidas also partnered with Ninja to make custom athletic shoes. In this case, the intended action was purchasing a signature shoe, instead of playing a video game.

And the shoe was relevant to the around-game experience by way of Ninja's clout as a video game streamer. So, Adidas was, therefore, participating in gaming marketing.



<sup>4</sup> A source informed Reuters [<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-electronic-arts-apexlegends/top-gamer-ninja-made-1-million-to-promote-eas-apex-legends-launch-source-idUSKBN1QU2AC>]

# Creative exercises

The following exercises are designed to guide your thinking about gaming as a marketing and advertising destination. They are meant to construct an understanding of concepts as opposed to ensure rote memorization.

As a result, all exercises are open-ended, since the point isn't to provide the right answer but to develop how to think about gaming as a marketer.

## Back to the future

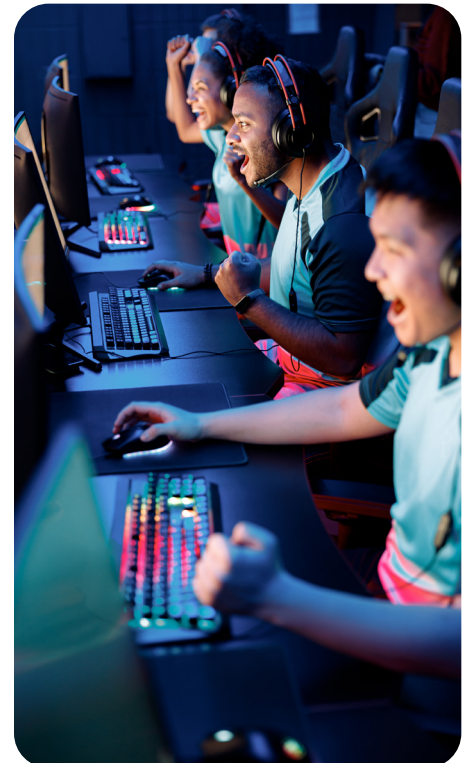
***“Let’s face it, advertising today is all about being current, or even ahead of the curve. So why look at what is behind the time?... Believe it or not, great advertising is also an intellectual enterprise.”***

*- James B. Twitch Ads That Shook the World*

Imagine your current self is transported, via time travel, to the year 3023. Gaming has achieved the same cultural impact in the 21<sup>st</sup> century that television did in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. So, 23 years into the 22<sup>nd</sup> century, a group of ethnographers want your input on how society viewed video games in 2023.

The exercise is to draft answers to their hypothetical questions:

- What were three things preventing all marketers from embracing gaming as a bona fide commercial communications medium?
- What were your personal views of gaming in 2023?
- In 3023, video games are recognized as digital equivalents of physical games. Why, in your opinion, did mainstream society segregate them from other games in 2023?



## Games in graffiti

***“People say graffiti is ugly, irresponsible and childish.  
But that’s only if it’s done properly.”***

*- Banksy*

The same ethnographers in the Back to Future exercise are asking you to help them understand the cultural impact of Fortnite, one of the most popular video game titles in 2023.

Your exercise is to create Fortnite-inspired graffiti sketches. If you are unfamiliar with the game title, feel free to search for ‘Fortnite cultural phenomenon’ in Google or another search engine for inspiration.

Remember there is no right or wrong answer. The sketch can be as simple or complex as you feel comfortable creating. The goal is to represent Fortnite as one example of a long line of video games titles that crossed over as culturally relevant experiences.

## Experience sketch

***“Life isn’t a matter of milestones, but of moments.”***

*- Rose Kennedy*

List the hypothetical emotions (how players feel about the game experience and each other), moments (key points in time before, during and after the in-game experience) and systems (technology required or involved with experiencing play) you associate with playing a multi-player online PC game with friends who live in different parts of the world.

For those unfamiliar, a multi-player online game can be played over the internet with multiple players from different locations. These games allow numerous participants to interact and compete or cooperate within a virtual game world.

<b><i>Emotions</i></b>	<b><i>Moments</i></b>	<b><i>Systems</i></b>





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**G**aming is no longer a niche activity. It is a mass medium commanding the attention of billions each year.

For marketers, that means gaming is a massive opportunity that can no longer be ignored.

Enter the Gaming Marketing Institute (GMI), an innovative initiative with a mission to clarify and simplify the practice of gaming marketing.

GMI offers world-class learning experiences, for everyone. Whether you are a recent graduate, an established professional, or simply looking to change your career.

All our programs are specifically designed to help marketers drive business goals through gaming.

<https://learngaming.gg>

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